

Attorney Docket No. AUS920010327US1
Serial No. 09/903,724
Response to Office Action mailed April 6, 2006

I. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims as indicated in the following listing:

1. (currently amended) A programmable apparatus for providing a pricing hint during an on-line sale offering to a first computer connected to a network comprising:
 - a second computer connected to the network;
 - a database in the memory of the second computer;
 - a program in the memory of the second computer for causing the first computer, responsive to a user selecting the database, to search the database, to identify a pricing hint, and to display the pricing hint.
2. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program determines the pricing hint based on historical data by accessing the database to identify a historical price paid at an earlier date for a product matching the online sale offering, and to display the historical price on the first computer as the pricing hint.
3. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program determines the pricing hint based on a current price by accessing the database to identify a price at which the on-line sale offering is currently being publicly offered for sale, and displaying the currently offered price on the first computer as the pricing hint.

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4. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 1 wherein the program provides the pricing hint based on a market value by accessing the database to identify a given number of similar products, to calculate the market value based on the given number of similar products, and to display the market value on the first computer.

5. (currently amended) A method for providing a pricing hint during an on-line auction comprising the steps of:

selecting an item on which to bid;

invoking a bid advisor program;

selecting a type of bid assistance; and

responsive to selecting the type of bid assistance, searching a database, determining a pricing hint based on the type of bid assistance selected, and displaying the pricing hint.

6. (original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of placing a bid.

7. (original) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting a bid assistant.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon historical pricing by accessing the database to identify a historical price paid at an earlier date for a product matching the online sale offering, and to display the historical price on the first computer as the pricing hint.

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9. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon a market value by accessing the database to identify a given number of similar products, to calculate the market value based on the given number of similar products, and to display the market value on the first computer.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting bid assistance based upon a current offering by accessing the database to identify a currently offered price at which the on-line sale offering is currently being publicly offered for sale, and displaying the currently offered price on the first computer as the pricing hint.

11. (currently amended) A programmable apparatus for providing pricing hints during an on-line auction comprising:

_____ programmable hardware comprising:

a server computer;

a client computer;

a database;

a network connecting the server computer, the client computer, and the data base; and

a bid advisor program installed on said server computer that, responsive to a user selecting the database, causes the server computer to search the database, and;

~~wherein the bid advisor program causes~~ causes the client computer to display the pricing hint;

wherein the database is selected from a group consisting of: a historical price database, current price database, and a market value database;

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wherein the historical pricing database contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a historical price paid at an earlier date for a product matching the online sale offering can be identified and displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint;

wherein the current price database contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a price at which the on-line sale offering is currently being publicly offered for sale can be identified and displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint;
and

wherein the market value data base contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a given number of similar products can be identified, a market value calculated based on the given number of similar products, and the market value displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint.

12. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising ~~an~~ a historical pricing program installed on said server computer that accesses the historical price database to identify the historical price.

13. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a current price pricing program installed on said server computer that accesses the current price database to identify the current price.

14. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 11 further comprising a market value pricing program installed on said server computer that accesses the market value database

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to identify the given number of similar products and to calculate the market value based on the given number of similar products.

15. canceled

16. canceled.

17. canceled.

18. canceled.

19. canceled.

20. canceled.

21. (currently amended) A computer readable memory for causing a computer to provide a pricing hint during an on-line auction comprising:

a computer readable storage medium;

a market value data base, a historical price database, and a current price database accessible to said computer;

a market value computer program, a historical price program, and a current price program stored in said storage medium;

_____ wherein the storage medium, so configured by said computer program, causes the computer to display the pricing hint based on a selection by a user of the historical price database, the current price database, or the market value database;

wherein the historical pricing database contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a historical price paid at an earlier date for a product

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matching the online sale offering can be identified and displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint;

wherein the current price database contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a price at which the on-line sale offering is currently being publicly offered for sale can be identified and displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint;
and

wherein the market value data base contains a plurality of data adapted to be searched by the programmable apparatus so that a given number of similar products can be identified, a market value calculated based on the given number of similar products, and the market value displayed on a user's computer as the pricing hint.

22. canceled.

23. canceled.

24. canceled.

25. canceled.

26. canceled.

27. canceled.

28. canceled.

29. (currently amended) A programmable apparatus for providing pricing hints during an on-line auction comprising:

programmable hardware comprising;

a server computer;

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a client computer;

a database containing a plurality of historical data, a plurality of current offering data, and a plurality of market value data located in a memory of the server computer;

a web browser program installed on said client computer;

a bid advisor program installed on said client computer; and

a network connecting the server computer, the client computer, and the data base;

_____ wherein the bid advisor program causes the pricing hint to be displayed on said client computer;

wherein the plurality of historical data is adapted to be searched by the bid advisor program so that a historical price paid for a product matching the online sale offering can be identified as the pricing hint;

wherein the plurality of current price data is adapted to be searched by the bid advisor program so that a price at which the on-line sale offering is currently being publicly offered for sale can be identified as the pricing hint; and

wherein the plurality of market value data is adapted to be searched by the bid advisor program so that a given number of similar products can be identified, a market value calculated based on the given number of similar products, and the market value identified as the pricing hint.

30. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further comprises ~~an search a~~ historical price program.

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31. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further comprises a ~~search~~-current price program.

32. (currently amended) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program further comprises a ~~compute~~-market value program.

33. (original) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises an historical pricing data base.

34. (original) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises a current price data base.

35. (original) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the data base further comprises a market value data base.

36. (original) The programmable apparatus of claim 29 wherein the bid advisor program is included within the web browser program.